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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/067,204	02/07/2002	Brian D. Hoff	81501085-00	7024

7590 08/15/2003

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EXAMINER

STORMER, RUSSELL D

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3617

DATE MAILED: 08/15/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/067,204

Applicant(s)

HOFF, BRIAN D.

Examiner

Russell D. Stormer

Art Unit

3617

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address.

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 22 May 2003.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-16 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 2,4,5,11 and 13 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,3,8-10,12,15 and 16 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 6,7 and 14 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 3.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

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Election/Restriction

1. Claims 2, 4, 5, 11, and 13 are withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b), as being drawn to nonelected species, there being no allowable generic or linking claim. Applicant timely traversed the restriction (election) requirement in Paper No. 6.

2. Applicant's election with traverse of the species set forth in Group II in Paper No. 6 is acknowledged. The traversal is on the grounds that the species requirement is improper because the species are not mutually exclusive. This is not found persuasive because as claimed the grouping of the species are mutually exclusive.

The claims are written so that most of the species are mutually exclusive, in that the separate methods of determining the force to be applied to the idler wheel are separately claimed. The exception being that each of the independent claims 1 and 10 claim only the well-known tensioning of the track based on the direction of travel of the vehicle, so that the different species later claimed would be in combination with this well-known determining factor. Claim 16 sets forth each of these factors in addition to a third condition and is also included in the elected group. The fact that the drawbar load can be determined in many ways would seem to be irrelevant to the election of species since none of these ways are specified in the claims.

The requirement is still deemed proper and is therefore made FINAL.

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Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

4. Claims 1, 9, and 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being Clearly anticipated by Gillet.

5. Claims 1, 9, and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being clearly anticipated by Henry et al.

6. Claims 1, 9, and 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being clearly anticipated by Siber et al.

7. Claims 1, 3, 8, 9, 10, 12, 15, and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being clearly anticipated by Hall (cited by Applicant).

Allowable Subject Matter

8. Claims 6, 7, and 14 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Conclusion

9. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. The references show other track tensioning devices.

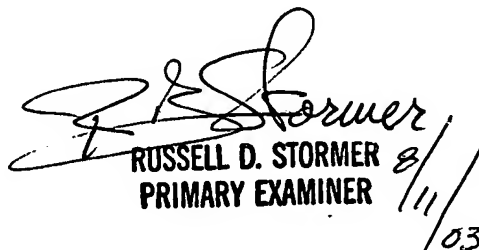
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Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Russell D. Stormer whose telephone number is (703) 308-3768. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday, 9 AM to 4 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Joe Morano can be reached on (703) 308-0230. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 872-9326 for regular communications and (703) 872-9327 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-1113.

rds
August 11, 2003


RUSSELL D. STORMER
PRIMARY EXAMINER 8/11/03